

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

505 VAN NESS AVENUE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

**Draft Environmental Impact Report  
for Sale of Surplus Southern California Gas Property  
at Playa del Rey and Marina del Rey  
SoCalGas A.99-05-029**

**INTRODUCTION**

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) initiates the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) under the direction of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).

**BACKGROUND AND PROPOSED PROJECT**

Southern California Gas Company ("SCG") has submitted its application with the CPUC to sell surplus land associated with 36 lots in Playa del Rey and Marina del Rey. The 34 undeveloped lots located in Playa del Rey are grouped into lot clusters of 1-8 lots. The two Marina del Rey lots represent a single cluster and are located approximately two miles north of Playa del Rey. The lots are to be sold "as-is" and do not carry any requirement for future development. Sub-surface and mineral rights would be retained by SCG and would not be included in the sale. Twelve of the lots each contain an abandoned gas well. These abandoned wells were once used as observation or monitoring wells for SCG's gas storage facility. Under the proposed project, SCG would sell the undeveloped lots to 4 different buyers. One buyer would purchase a single lot, while the other three would acquire the remaining 11 clusters of 35 lots.

**NEED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

CEQA applies to a discretionary project unless the project is exempt from CEQA.<sup>1</sup> A "project" is defined by CEQA as the whole of an action that has the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.<sup>2</sup>

The "project" identified in this application is a request for authorization for the sale of SCG's Playa del Rey and Marina del Rey lots. The environmental issues under review are related to whether the proposed sale of the lots and subsequent reasonably foreseeable development of the lots would have environmental impacts and whether, if there are any such impacts, they are justified by the benefits of the sale.

**PROJECT LOCATION**

The project area is located approximately 4 miles south of the City of Santa Monica, 1.5 miles north of the Los Angeles International Airport, and 0.5 mile west of Culver City, and is bordered by the Santa Monica Bay to the west. Playa del Rey is located within the City of Los Angeles and Marina del Rey is located within the County of Los Angeles, approximately 15 miles southwest of downtown Los Angeles. Marina del Rey is approximately 2 miles northwest of Playa del Rey, separated by the Ballona Wetlands and the Marina del Rey Channel.

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<sup>1</sup> Cal. Pub. Res. Code §21080 (a).

<sup>2</sup> 14 C.C.R. §15378 (a).

The project area lies on the far western end of the City of Los Angeles, south of Santa Monica and north of Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). The project involves two areas on the north and south sides of the Ballona Lagoon in existing developed urban areas. The lots have no access to the Ballona Lagoon, the Ballona wetlands, or other sensitive areas, with the exception of the ocean frontage associated with the 2 lots in Marina del Rey.

Thirty-four of the lots proposed for sale are scattered throughout the long established residential neighborhood of Playa del Rey, California and sit atop a bluff overlooking the Ballona Wetlands and Marina del Rey. These lots surround the upper site of SCG's Playa del Rey Trap Gas Storage Facility (PDRGSF) to the south, east, and west, from approximately 38 feet to 600 feet (see Figure 3). The Playa del Rey project area lies south of the Ballona Lagoon and Wetland Reserve and the Playa del Rey Bluffs. The Marina del Rey project area borders Venice Beach (see Figure 4). The 2 lots are located in a residential community on the coastal side of the Marina Peninsula.

#### **POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

The EIR will focus on the areas that could be affected by the project, the significance of which will be analyzed in the EIR: Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards, Hydrology, Noise, Transportation/Traffic, and Utilities.

#### **NO IMPACT/LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS**

Based on its preliminary review, the CPUC has determined that the proposed project would have a less than significant impact or no impact on aesthetics, agricultural resources, energy, land use, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, and recreation.

#### **NOP COMMENTS**

This Notice of Preparation has been sent to interested State, local and federal agencies, to the State Clearinghouse, and to parties that have informed the CPUC of their interest in this project. Affected agencies should identify the issues within their statutory responsibilities that should be considered in the Draft EIR. Similarly, other interested agencies, organizations and persons should comment on the scope of the Draft EIR.

In order to ensure the EIR addresses all appropriate environmental concerns, this NOP is intended to seek all relevant comments pertaining to the scope of analysis in the EIR. Comments in response to this NOP are required to be submitted no later than October 2, 2003. All written responses must be sent to:

Mr. Roosevelt Grant  
CPUC Environmental Project Manager  
c/o Environmental Science Associates  
225 Bush Street, Suite 1700  
San Francisco, CA 94104-4207

Comments can also be submitted by the same deadline via electronic mail at [playadivest@esassoc.com](mailto:playadivest@esassoc.com). To comment verbally, please leave a voice message at (415) 962-8446.

An Initial Study has been prepared for the proposed project and can be viewed at the Lloyd Taber-Marina del Rey Library located at 4533 Admiralty Way, Marina del Rey, California. The Initial Study can also be viewed electronically at <http://www.playadivest.com>.